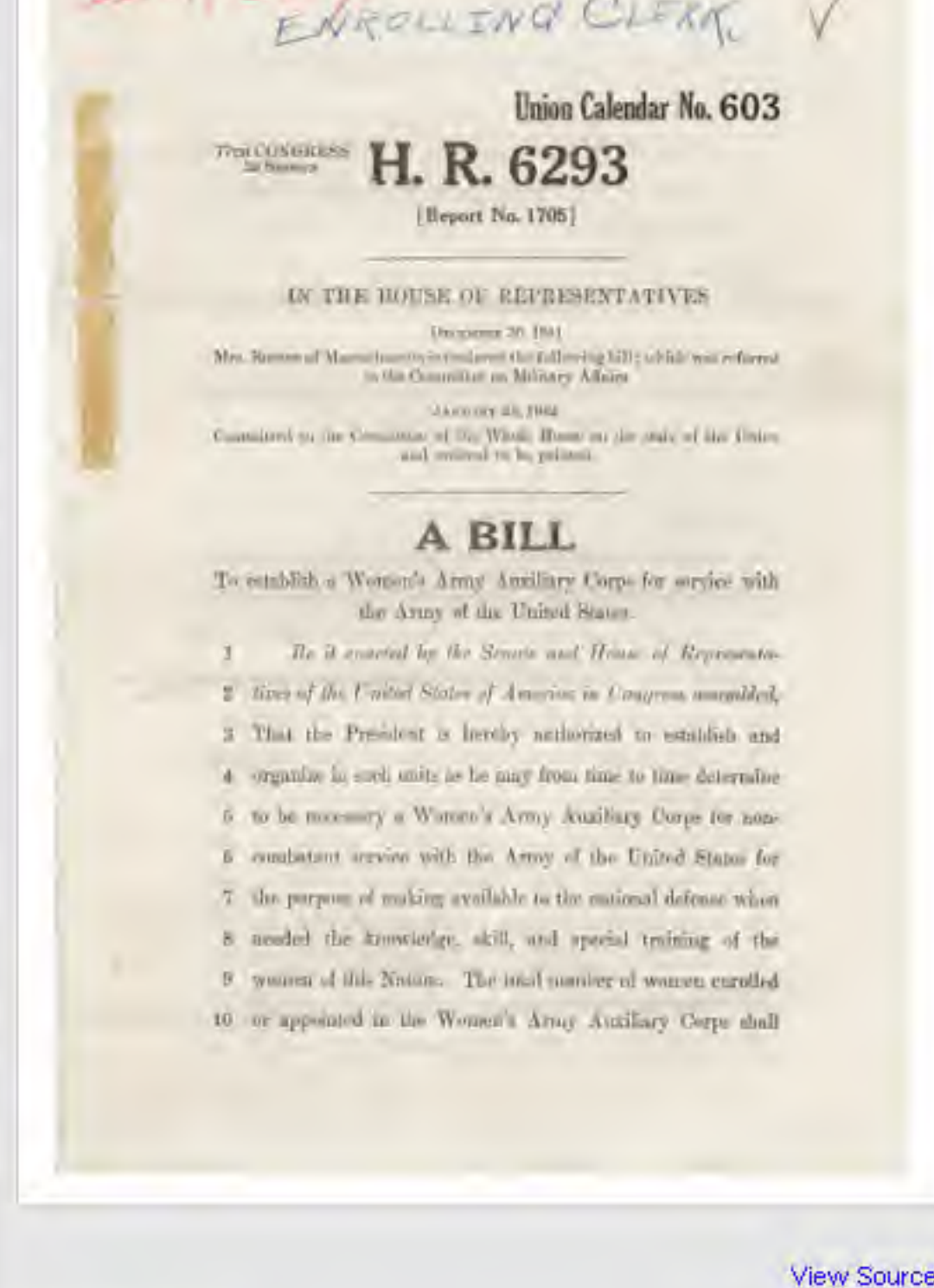


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Background on the [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps \(WAAC\)](#) from our colleagues in Legislative Archives.

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Congress in the Archives will feature monthly staff posts on our blog. Today's post comes from Center archives specialist Christine Blackerby.

"The President is hereby authorized to establish...a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for non-combatant service with the Army of the United States for the purpose of making available to the national defense when needed the knowledge, skill, and special training of the women of this Nation. The total number of women enrolled to be appointed in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps shall

On May 15, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed H.R. 6293 into law, establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). This new unit operated alongside, not within, the Army. Benefits, status, and pay differed from normal military service.

Six months before America entered World War II (and about a year prior to WAAC passing), [Representative Edith Nourse Rogers](#) (R-MA) introduced H.R. 4906 to establish WAAC, but it was not well received. Then Japan's deliberate attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 altered perspectives. Young, able men joined or were drafted into the military, and questions began to circle throughout Congress: Would there be enough soldiers to win this war? Where could the military find more workers?

Rep. Rogers provided an answer to these questions when she introduced a new WAAC bill, H.R. 6293, into the House of Representatives on January 2, 1942. Supporters for H.R. 6293 came from a wide range of people, including General George C. Marshall, Eleanor Roosevelt, and American women's groups. Opposition weighed heavily on the belief that women belonged in the home and that the entire organization would be viewed as weak or ineffective by other countries and their militaries.

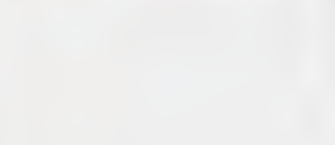
Despite resistance to changing roles of women, the need for more military "manpower" prevailed, and the bill passed the House with a vote of 249 to 86. While the House supported the bill with large numbers, it passed the Senate with a slimmer margin of 38 to 27.

H.R. 6293, 1/28/1942, HR 77A-B5, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives (ARC 4397811)



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15th May 2012



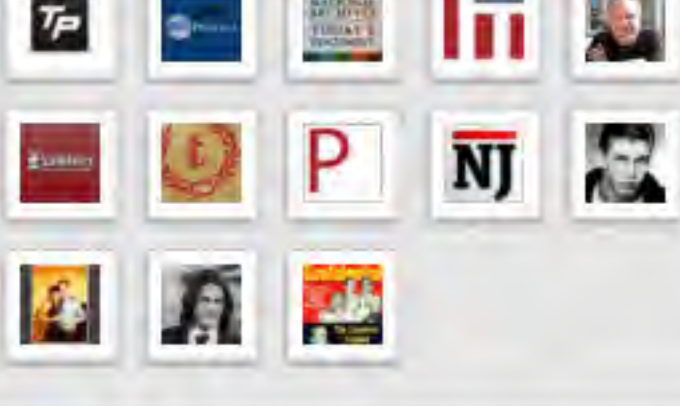
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Background on the [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps \(WAAC\)](#) from our colleagues in Legislative...



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The problem with America isn't what people do in their bedrooms but what they've been doing in boardrooms.

— [Robert Reich](#) (via [thenationmagazine](#))

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15th May 2012



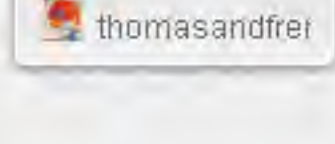
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